The algorithms and displays presented herein are not inherently related to any particular computer or other apparatus. Various general-purpose systems may also be used with programs in accordance with the teachings herein, or it may prove convenient to construct more specialized apparatus to perform the required method steps. The required structure for a variety of these systems appears in the description above. In addition, the present invention is not described with reference to any particular programming language. It is appreciated that a variety of programming languages may be used to implement the teachings of the present invention as described herein, and any references to specific languages are provided for disclosure of enablement and best mode of the present invention.

The present invention is well-suited to a wide variety of computer network systems over numerous topologies. Within this field, the configuration and management of large networks comprise storage devices and computers that are communicatively coupled to dissimilar computers and storage devices over a network, such as the Internet.

Finally, it should be noted that the language used in the specification has been principally selected for readability and instructional purposes, and may not have been selected to delineate or circumscribe the inventive subject matter. Accordingly, the disclosure of the present invention is intended to be illustrative, but not limiting, of the scope of the invention, which is set forth in the following claims.

The invention claimed is:

1. A computer implemented method for handling database requests for client systems over a network, the method comprising:

receiving at a master control module from a request handler a database request of a client;

determining by the master control module an assigned database server for handling the database request from a group of available database servers;

prompting by the master control module the assigned database server to load a database corresponding to the database request;

providing by the master control module information regarding the assigned database server to the request handler for the request handler to directly provide the database request to the assigned database server for handling the database request.

2. The method of claim **1**, wherein determining by the master control module the assigned database server for handling the database request from the group of available database servers further comprises:

determining that the database request is a request to create a database;

generating a database identifier for the database; and

mapping the database to the assigned database server using the database identifier.

3. The method of claim **2**, further comprising:

receiving by the master control module a subsequent database request containing the database identifier;

using by the master control module the database identifier to determine the assigned database server; and

providing by the master control module the subsequent database request to the assigned database server for handling the subsequent database request.

4. The method of claim **1**, wherein determining by the master control module the assigned database server for handling the database request from the group of available database servers further comprises:

responsive to determining that there is no database server assigned to handle the database request,

assigning a selected database server from the group of available database servers as the assigned database server; and

updating a mapping of previously created databases to their respective database servers to include the assignment of the selected database server to the database.

5. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

responsive to a failure in the handling of the database request by the assigned database server,

assigning by the master control module the database request to an alternative database server selected from the group of available database servers; and

providing by the master control module the database request to the alternative database server for handling the database request.

6. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

responsive to an elapsed time for the handling of the database request by the assigned database server exceeding a threshold,

instructing by the master control module the assigned database server to terminate the handling of the database request;

assigning by the master control module the database request to an alternative database server selected from the group of available database servers; and

providing by the master control module the database request to the alternative database server for handling the database request.

7. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

maintaining location information for a plurality of request making clients corresponding to a particular database associated with the database request;

assigning by the master control module the database request to an alternative database server selected from the group of available database servers by analyzing the location information for the plurality of request making clients; and

providing by the master control module the database request to the alternative database server for handling the database request.

8. The method of claim **7**, wherein the alternative database server is assigned based upon a determination that a substantial number of the request making clients are located closer to the alternative database server than the assigned database server.

9. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

assigning by the master control module the database request to an alternative database server selected from the group of available database servers, based upon a comparison of a first expected load on the assigned database server and a second expected load on the alternative database server.

10. The method of claim **1**, further comprising:

assigning by the master control module the database request to an alternative database server selected from the group of available database servers; and

providing by the master control module the database request to the alternative database server for handling the database request.

11. A system for handling database requests for client systems over a network, the system comprising:

a request handling module for receiving from a client a database request;

a plurality of database servers for receiving and handling database requests; and

a master control module, in direct communication with the request handling module and the plurality of data-